

PERSONAL AND
CONFIDENTIAL

November 28, 1956

EUR - Mr. Merchant
H - Mr. Claxton

Through: S/S

The Secretary would like your comments urgently on the attached proposed letter to Senator Hickenlooper in reply to the latter's telegram from Berlin # 419, particularly the language telling him about the contingency planning.

J. N. Greene, Jr.

Attachment:

Letter to Sen. Hickenlooper.

S:JNG:jm

CONFIDENTIAL

NND 9010097
HRM/SG 4/12/51

NND 8-137

November 28, 1958

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Dear Bourke:

I have your telegram from Berlin. You are, I think, quite right in assuming that my press conference statement in answer to a question was grossly misinterpreted. If you will read the full press conference, of which I enclose a copy, I think you will come to the same conclusion. What happened was that the wire services quickly sent out a "flash" in an effort to get something sensational.

I could hardly have said that we would not under any circumstances deal with the GDR as agents of the Soviet Union because in fact that is the basis upon which we are now dealing with them in some respects. Also, and this is for your confidential information, there has been in existence for several years a contingency paper agreed to by the British, French and ourselves calling for precisely such a handling of the situation. You will note that I said that "if the character of the activity is such as to indicate that to accept this would involve acceptance of a substitution of the GDR for the present obligation and responsibility of the Soviet Union, then that, I take it, we would not do".

My press conference is replete with the strongest possible statements as to holding the Soviet Union to its responsibilities. It is really shocking what a false impression can be given on so little evidence. I would have thought that my reputation established over the years of being "tough" would have led to skepticism that in that all of a sudden I was turning "soft".

The Honorable
Bourke B. Hickenlooper
United States Senate

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I am leaving for Mexico for the inauguration on Sunday morning and then to San Francisco for a speech, so that I will not be back here until the latter part of next week. Meanwhile, I thank you for your telegram and confirm your confidence that I am strong for the maintenance of a firm position in Berlin. I think the statement that I gave out yesterday, of which I also enclose a copy, bears this out.

Sincerely yours,

John Foster Dulles

Enclosures

S:JFD:cjp

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